

REMARKS

Claims 4-6 remain pending in this application. None of the claims have been amended in this Response.

The Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for acknowledging the Applicant's claim for foreign priority. In accordance with the Examiner's request, a certified copy of the priority document will be submitted to the Examiner in due course.

The drawings were objected to due to dark shading used in FIG. 2. In response, the Applicant has submitted a replacement sheet that provide a clearer illustration of the invention. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claims 4-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by *Wallenius et al.* (US2002/0176379). The Applicant traverses the rejection. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

The Applicant wishes to point out that the cited *Wallenius* application claims priority to application number PCT/EP99/06458. The cover sheet of the U.S. application claims the PCT application was filed on February 9, 1999. However, this information is incorrect. The priority PCT document discloses a filing date of September 2, 1999, which is subsequent to the filing date of the present application. Apparently, there was confusion regarding the "European" method of claiming a particular date (i.e. 02/09/1999 for September 2, 1999), and the U.S. method of claiming a particular date (i.e., 09/02/1999 for September 2, 1999). As such, *Wallenius* cannot be considered prior art for the purposes of this examination, and the Applicant respectfully requests that the rejection be withdrawn. For at least these reasons, claims 4-6 are in allowable form, and an early Notice of Allowance is earnestly requested.

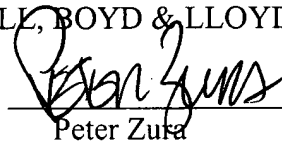
If any fees are due in connection with this application as a whole, the Examiner is authorized to deduct such fees from deposit account no. 02-1818. If such a deduction is made, please indicate the attorney docket number (0112710-0368) on the account statement..

Appl. No. 10/009,713
Reply to Office Action of November 25, 2003

Respectfully submitted,

BELL, BOYD & LLOYD LLC

BY

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter Zura", is written over a horizontal line.

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